DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 224 966 CE 034 761

AUTHOR Richards, Beverly
TITLE Characteristics of an Effective Teacher.
PUB DATE Dec 82
NOTE 20p.; Presented at the American Vocational Association Convention (St. Louis, MO, December 1982).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Associate Degrees; *Evaluation Criteria; *Nursing Education; Student Attitudes; *Student Evaluation of Teacher Performance; Student Teacher Relationship; *Teacher Characteristics; Teacher Effectiveness; *Teacher Evaluation; *Teacher Improvement; Two Year Colleges
IDENTIFIERS Iowa

ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to identify the characteristics of effective clinical instruction as perceived by faculty and students in a sample of associate degree nursing programs in Iowa. From the population of 18 associate degree nursing programs in the state, a stratified random sample of approximately one-third was chosen for voluntary completion of a questionnaire. The survey instrument, developed from a literature study, included two sections. Section 1 asked respondents to rate the 23 characteristics of teachers, while in section 2 respondents were to select the five most important characteristics of clinical teachers. Results of the study showed that students and faculty disagreed on 6 of the 23 items in the first part of the study. Items considered to be more important to the instructors than the students included relating theory to practice, supervising students and individualizing instructions. Items that were of more importance to the students than the faculty were providing useful feedback on student progress and demonstrating skills, attitudes, and values that are to be developed by the students. In relation to the five most important characteristics, instructors chose more items in the professional competency category, while students chose more items in the classification of student relationships. Identification of these characteristics has implications for those entering the teaching field as well as for those evaluating current clinical instructors. (KC)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED224966

Characteristics of An Effective Teacher

by

Beverly Richards, R.N., D.Ed.
Assistant Professor
College of Education
University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa 52242

CE 034 761

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

B Richards

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Introduction

The Dictionary of Education broadly defines teaching as the management of teaching-learning situations. Guide, show, tell, enhance, promote, direct, communicate, manage, plan, develop, facilitate, communicate are just a few of the words that evolve when people come together to talk about what they do as teachers. These verbs clearly denote that the teacher is involved actively in the teaching-learning process. What happens to teaching when the environment is changed from the classroom to the clinical area? Are there differences between classroom and clinical teachers?

In nursing, the classroom instructor functions primarily as a teacher whereas the clinical instructor must be both practitioner and teacher. Smith (1968) noted this duality of roles requires a discipline command of theory, ease in its application, and ability to help others develop knowledge and skills. Clissold (1962) compared the differences between the two environments in relation to authority, responsibility, relationships, structuring, guiding and evaluating the learning experiences. The classroom instructor has authority over the classroom environment whereas the clinical instructor has no authority over clinical environment. The classroom instructor's responsibility is the education of the nursing students while the clinical instructor has the same responsibility but must also include the safety of the patient. The classroom instructor's relationships are primarily with nursing students and other faculty members whereas the clinical instructor has those same relationships but also must include patients, head nurses, team leaders, team members, doctors, ward clerks, dietary, housekeeping, etc. Structuring the learning experience is depen-

dent on the classroom instructor alone, however, the clinical instructor must choose and request the clinical area in which the objectives of the student's experience might best be achieved, obtain cooperation from personnel in the clinical area, and plan those learning experiences with the patients, nursing students, head nurse, team leaders, team members, doctors, etc. The classroom instructor guides the learning experiences through individual conferences, group discussions, conferences, and assignments whereas the clinical instructor must utilize the same activities but must take into consideration nursing care plans and, most important, guiding the student in actual care of the patient. To evaluate the learning experiences, both the classroom and clinical instructor use discussions, examinations, student self-evaluation and student evaluation of the teaching-learning situation. In addition, the classroom instructor uses term papers or projects and quizzes, while the clinical instructor employs observation of the student, anecdotal records, nursing care plans and nursing care studies. These environmental differences in teaching place additional responsibility on the clinical instructor.

Generally, clinical instructors have less formal training in instruction than classroom teachers. In the past, the selection of clinical instructors has been based on their skills and competencies in patient care activities. If one was an "excellent" nurse, one would be, at the very least, a "good" clinical instructor. Experience has shown that this is not necessarily so.

Review of Literature

Although clinical instruction has been recognized as a significant and essential component of professional education in the health field, few

attempts have been made to examine instructional skills critical to clinical teaching. Schweer and Gebbie (1976) described the professional qualifications and preparations of the clinical instructor in self concept, knowledge of content and clinical competencies. They listed five areas of clinical competence: 1) application of concepts and scientific principles to patient care activities, 2) performance of technical skills with a flexibility allowing for modifications to meet the immediate needs of the situation, 3) adequate assessment as a basis for making appropriate judgment, 4) planning, organizing and directing various levels of personnel and disciplines in implementing learning experiences to meet the needs of patient, and 5) establishment of effective communications and interpersonal relationships to provide the desired learning milieu. Four ideal characteristics were identified by Bonapart (1977) in a symposium sponsored by the National League for Nursing: 1) the ability to plan the objectives of the learning experience, 2) to see that the student embarks on the learning endeavor, 3) to give meaning to that endeavor, and 4) to evaluate the student's progress and enable him/her to become self-directed.

Criteria for selecting clinical instructors was specified by Strohmann (1977) who correlated effectiveness of the clinical experience to the clinical faculty. Four of the nine criteria centered on faculty-student relationships: the ability to 1) place students at ease, 2) inspire confidence and respect, 3) value the individuality of each student, and 4) acknowledge the need for flexibility in teaching and evaluating students.

Student relationships and perceptions of clinical faculty were addressed in studies by Barham (1965), Butler and Geitgey (1970), Jacobson (1970),

Mims (1970), Lowery, et al (1971), Armington, et al (1972), Dixon and Koerner (1976) and Brown (1981). These studies identified characteristics of the effective clinical instructor and were used collectively as the basis for an instrument to compare student and faculty perceptions of an effective clinical teacher.

Methodology

This study addressed the description of characteristics of an effective clinical teacher in one health area, associate degree nursing programs, from two perspectives: student and faculty. A descriptive research approach was used for this study. The instrument (Appendix A) evolved from a composite of items found in the literature and included two sections. Section I asked respondents to rate 23 characteristics of teachers using the stated rating code. In Section II, the five most important characteristics of clinical teachers were to be selected from the 23 in Section I and ranked in order of importance.

From the population of 18 associate degree nursing programs in Iowa, a stratified random sample of approximately one-third of the population was chosen. Participation was voluntary. The investigator met with the senior nursing students and clinical faculty to explain the purposes of the study and to administer the questionnaire. Statistical measures used in Section I included frequency, percentages, and chi square. Frequency distribution and percentages were used in Section II.

Interpretation of Data

Statistical measures were implemented to determine how associate degree nursing students and clinical faculty compared in their description of

characteristics of effective clinical teachers. Table 1 gives the percent distribution of responses to each item by group for Section I of the questionnaire. Items 3, 4, 6, 7, 13, 15, 16, and 24 were chosen by 50 percent or more of the faculty respondents as being of most importance: shows genuine interest in patients and their care, relates underlying theory to clinical practice, conveys confidence in and respect for the student, is well informed and able to communicate knowledge to students, is honest and direct with students, is objective and fair in the evaluation of the student, demonstrates skills, attitudes and values that are to be developed by the student in the clinical area, and correlates clinical experience to classroom theory, respectively. Although eight items were perceived by faculty members to be of most importance, only two items were marked by 50 percent or more of the students in that category, 7 and 15. Both groups chose items 7 and 15. One faculty member marked item 5 as having no importance whereas students perceived items 5 (7 students), 17 (3 students), 22 (1 student), and 23 (2 students) as having no importance.

The instrument's code was collapsed horizontally in two categories: important (responses A, B, and C), and unimportant (responses D and E). Table 2 depicts those items which were perceived to be important and unimportant by the two groups. Students perceived all items as having some degree of no importance except for items 12, 13, 14, and 15; whereas faculty members perceived that only items 5, 17, 22, and 24 had some degree of no importance. Both groups marked item 5, displays a sense of humor, as having the least importance (students 18 percent, faculty 17 percent)

To determine if there was a significant difference in the two groups' responses to each item, a Chi Square test was run with $p<.05$ chosen as the

level of significance (Table 3). Items 4, 8, 10, 16, 23 and 24 were significant, statistically. Approximately 58 percent of faculty members compared to 38 percent of students perceived item 4 as being of most importance. In item 8, the greatest difference was in the very important category with approximately 67 percent of faculty responding compared to 47 percent of students responding. Approximately 4 percent of faculty members compared to 19 percent of students marked item 10 as important. In this same category, important, similar differences were found in item 16 with 6 percent and 18 percent of faculty and students respectively. Two categories contributed to the significant difference in item 23. Fifty percent of the faculty perceived it to be important compared to 38 percent of the students and no faculty member marked it to be of slight or no importance compared to 8 percent of the students. Item 24 varied in both the most important and very important categories with 56 percent faculty compared to 34 percent of students in of most importance and 25 percent faculty to 45 percent students in very important. Although both perceived items 4, 8, 10, 16 and 24 to be important characteristics, the differences lie in the level of importance. Students responded to item 23 as being less important than the faculty group.

The 23 characteristics of Section I were sorted into three classifications: professional competence, relationship with students and personal attributes. Professional competence included items 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 10, 15, 16, 17, 23, and 24; relationships with students included items 6, 12, 13, 14, 20, 21, and 22; and personal attributes included items 5, 9, 11, 18, and 19. The six items with significant differences were classified under professional competency. Five of the six were perceived by most faculty to be very important or of most importance. Item 23 was perceived by more students than faculty to be very important or of most importance.

In Section II of the instrument the respondents were to choose the five most important characteristics and rank them in order of importance. Table 4 indicates the frequency of each item that was ranked and the missing cases. Over 50 percent of the students ranked item 7, is well informed and able to communicate knowledge to students, as one of the five most important characteristics of an effective clinical teacher. Fifty percent or more of the faculty group ranked items 3, shows genuine interest in patients and their care, 4, relates underlying theory to clinical practice, 7, is well informed and able to communicate knowledge to students, and 16, demonstrates skills, attitudes, and values that are to be developed by the student in the clinical area, as being among the five most important effective clinical teacher characteristics. In descending order, items 7, 6, 15, 14, and 12 were responded to the greatest number of times by the student group. The faculty group's most frequent responses were to items 4, 16, 7, 3, and 15 in descending order. Items 7, is well informed and able to communicate knowledge to students, and 15, is objective and fair in evaluation of student, were ranked by both groups in the top five characteristics of an effective clinical teacher.

Findings

Hypothesis I, that clinical nursing faculty and associate degree nursing students are congruent in their description of the effective clinical teacher, must be rejected through analysis of data. The results indicated there was a significant difference ($p<.05$) between groups in six of the 23 items: 4, relates underlying theory to clinical practice, 8, supervises and helps in new experiences without taking over, 10, provides useful feedback on student progress, 15, demonstrates skills, attitudes and values that are to

be developed by the student in the clinical area, 23, considers individual differences in selecting learning experiences, and 24, correlates clinical experiences to classroom theory. All six items belonged to the classification of professional competence. Although these items were perceived by both groups to be important characteristics, the differences were in the level of importance with item 23 ranked as less important by the student group.

The items that both groups ranked among the five most important characteristics were items of professional competence: 7, is well informed and able to communicate knowledge to students, and 15, is objective and fair in evaluation of student. The other three items (3, 4, and 16) selected by the faculty were classified as characteristics of professional competence; whereas the student group chose three items (6, 12, and 14) which were classified as characteristics of relationships with students. Items classified as personal attributes were not chosen by either group for the five most important characteristics.

Implications

Implications from the study will be discussed first in relation to significant characteristics and second, in relation to the five most important characteristics. Six items were found to be significant statistically between the two groups.

Those items considered to be of more importance to the instructor than the student included relates underlying theory to clinical practice, supervises and helps in new experiences without taking over, considers individual differences in selecting learning experiences, and correlating clinical

experiences to classroom theory. In order for students to become effective practitioners, they must be able to apply theory to practice. Principles of learning demonstrate that for learning to occur, students must be actively involved and have an opportunity to reflect upon the learning experience. They must have an opportunity to practice making the transition from theory to practice. The bridge from theory to practice is the clinical instructor's responsibility. It is essential for the student to internalize the importance of applying theory for practice in providing optimum health care to the consumer. The instructor sets the stage for learning in the clinical agency. By selecting learning experiences, the instructor can help the student develop areas of weaknesses into strengths. Input from the student is vital in identifying areas of weakness but this input will be provided only if there is a common understanding and mutual respect between the student and instructor. Each student learns at a different pace. It is frustrating if the student cannot accomplish the expected task. The clinical instructor must allow the student time to complete the task without jeopardizing patient safety. Perhaps instructors need to examine their teaching strategies and determine if they are allowing an appropriate length of time for the student to complete the task.

Two of the six significant items were of more importance to the students than the faculty members: provides useful feedback on student progress and demonstrates skills, attitudes, and values that are to be developed by the student in the clinical area. The clinical area often is stressful for the student since he or she is dealing with human lives. Providing useful feedback to students helps reduce tension and stress. It reduces the chance of

error by allowing students to concentrate on their next learning experiences without worrying about how well they did on their previous experience. The clinical instructor serves as a role model for students. As a role model, one must establish therapeutic relationships and demonstrate an understanding of human behavior and the communication process. As a role model, the consumer is the patient, as a clinical instructor, the consumer is the student. We should not expect less for the student.

In relation to the five most important characteristics, clinical instructors chose items in the professional competency classification: 1) is well informed and able to communicate knowledge to students, 2) is objective and fair in evaluation of students, 3) shows genuine interest in patients and their care, 4) relates underlying theory to clinical practice, and 5) demonstrates skills, attitudes and values that are to be developed by the student in the clinical area. Since the professional competence classification refers to instructor's role as practitioner, it is apparent that instructors feel most comfortable with this role.

Associate degree nursing students chose two items in the classification of professional competence (1 and 2 listed above) and three items from the classification of student relationships: 3) conveys confidence in and respect for the student, 4) is realistic in expectations of students, and 5) encourages students to feel free to ask questions or to ask for help. This indicates that students perceive items from the student relationship classification to be of equal importance. This finding has clear implications for clinical instructors to seek to develop their role as teachers.

Summary

The study was conducted to identify the characteristics of an effective clinical instructor as perceived by faculty and students in a sample of associate degree nursing programs in Iowa. Through determination of these characteristics, clinical instructors can improve their role as teachers specifically in developing the methodology required for teaching and by providing an environment for effective learning. Identification of these characteristics has implications for those entering the teaching field as well as for those evaluating current clinical instructors. The ultimate goal is to improve clinical teaching.

Table 1

Percent Distribution of Responses to Each Item By Group

Item	Students					Faculty				
	A	B	C	D	E	A	B	C	D	E
2	32.7%	52.1%	14.3%	.9%	0 %	46.2%	36.5%	17.3%	0 %	0 %
3	48.4%	43.3%	7.4%	.9%	0 %	61.5%	36.5%	2.0%	0 %	0 %
4	38.2%	48.4%	12.9%	.5%	0 %	57.7%	34.6%	7.7%	0 %	0 %
5	6.0%	24.0%	52.1%	14.7%	3.2%	2.0%	28.8%	51.9%	15.4%	2.0%
6	47.9%	41.0%	10.6%	.5%	0 %	57.7%	28.8%	13.5%	0 %	0 %
7	65.9%	29.5%	4.1%	.5%	0 %	61.5%	32.7%	5.8%	0 %	0 %
8	36.4%	47.0%	16.1%	.5%	0 %	23.1%	67.3%	9.6%	0 %	0 %
9	28.1%	46.5%	23.5%	1.8%	0 %	30.8%	55.8%	13.5%	0 %	0 %
10	33.6%	46.1%	18.9%	1.4%	0 %	34.6%	61.5%	3.9%	0 %	0 %
11	37.8%	45.6%	15.7%	.9%	0 %	34.6%	53.8%	11.5%	0 %	0 %
12	43.8%	42.4%	13.8%	0 %	0 %	32.7%	55.8%	11.5%	0 %	0 %
13	44.7%	44.2%	11.1%	0 %	0 %	51.9%	42.3%	5.8%	0 %	0 %
14	48.4%	42.4%	9.2%	0 %	0 %	44.2%	50.0%	5.8%	0 %	0 %
15	53.9%	38.2%	7.8%	0 %	0 %	59.6%	40.4%	0 %	0 %	0 %
16	37.3%	42.9%	18.0%	1.8%	0 %	53.8%	40.4%	5.8%	0 %	0 %
17	30.0%	36.9%	30.0%	1.8%	1.4%	32.7%	48.1%	17.3%	2.0%	0 %
18	26.7%	47.9%	24.0%	1.4%	0 %	34.6%	53.8%	11.5%	0 %	0 %
19	17.1%	50.0%	30.9%	2.3%	0 %	13.5%	65.4%	21.2%	0 %	0 %
20	28.1%	47.0%	22.6%	2.3%	0 %	19.2%	61.5%	19.2%	0 %	0 %
21	34.6%	46.5%	18.0%	.9%	0 %	32.7%	48.1%	19.2%	0 %	0 %
22	14.3%	45.2%	36.9%	3.2%	.5%	5.8%	38.5%	51.9%	3.9%	0 %
23	18.9%	41.0%	38.8%	7.4%	.9%	11.5%	38.5%	50.0%	0 %	0 %
24	33.6%	45.2%	20.7%	.5%	0 %	55.8%	25.0%	17.3%	2.0%	0 %

Table 2

Percentage of Response by Groups
Using Collapsed Code

Item	Student ABC	Student DE	Faculty ABC	Faculty DE
2	99%	1%	100%	0%
3	99%	1%	100%	0%
4	99%	1%	100%	0%
5	82%	18%	83%	17%
6	99%	1%	100%	0%
7	99%	1%	100%	0%
8	99%	1%	100%	0%
9	98%	2%	100%	0%
10	99%	1%	100%	0%
11	99%	1%	100%	0%
12	100%	0%	100%	0%
13	100%	0%	100%	0%
14	100%	0%	100%	0%
15	100%	0%	100%	0%
16	98%	2%	100%	0%
17	97%	3%	98%	2%
18	99%	1%	100%	0%
19	98%	2%	100%	0%
20	98%	2%	100%	0%
21	99%	1%	100%	0%
22	96%	4%	96%	4%
23	92%	8%	100%	0%
24	99%	1%	98%	2%

ABC = Important

DE = Unimportant

Table 3

Level of Significance Between Group Responses to Each Item

Item	Chi Square	Degrees of Freedom	Results
2	4.3255	2	not significant
3	4.2949	2	not significant
4	6.0704	2	$p < .05$
5	1.7481	3	not significant
6	2.6195	2	not significant
7	0.3822	2	not significant
8	6.9368	2	$p < .05$
9	3.4127	2	not significant
10	8.6759	2	$p < .05$
11	1.4001	2	not significant
12	3.0701	2	not significant
13	1.8156	2	not significant
14	1.2882	2	not significant
15	4.3707	2	not significant
16	7.7253	2	$p < .05$
17	4.1312	2	not significant
18	4.5133	2	not significant
19	4.2342	2	not significant
20	3.5956	2	not significant
21	0.0665	2	not significant
22	5.2301	3	not significant
23	9.5083	3	$p < .05$
24	9.6273	2	$p < .05$

Table 4

Frequency of Responses to Section II Items

Item	Student N=218		Faculty N=52	
	Missing	Valid	Missing	Valid
2	179	39	39	13
3	165	53	26	26
4	149	69	23	29
5	206	12	50	2
6	124	94	34	18
7	87	131	25	27
8	167	51	44	8
9	195	23	46	6
10	183	35	43	9
11	171	47	48	4
12	147	71	48	4
13	162	56	39	13
14	146	72	39	13
15	139	79	32	20
16	162	56	24	28
17	179	39	43	9
18	193	25	47	5
19	206	12	51	1
20	195	23	49	3
21	186	32	47	5
22	213	5	52	0
23	205	13	51	1
24	170	48	36	16

Appendix A

CLINICAL TEACHER CHARACTERISTICS INSTRUMENT

Purpose - The following tool is designed for the nursing student and faculty member to rate the characteristics of an effective clinical teacher

SECTION I

Instructions - Please indicate your response to each item using the code stated below. Do not include your name or I.D. number. The code is:

a = of most importance
b = very important
c = important
d = slightly important
e = of no importance

____ 1. Please indicate whether you are a student or faculty member.
(a) Student (b) Faculty Member

____ 2. Facilitates student's awareness of their professional responsibilities.

____ 3. Shows genuine interest in patients and their care.

____ 4. Relates underlying theory to clinical practice.

____ 5. Displays a sense of humor.

____ 6. Conveys confidence in and respect for the student.

____ 7. Is well informed and able to communicate knowledge to students.

____ 8. Supervises and helps in new experiences without taking over.

____ 9. Admits limitations and mistakes honestly.

____ 10. Provides useful feedback on student progress.

____ 11. Is self-controlled, cooperative, and patient.

____ 12. Is realistic in expectations of students.

____ 13. Is honest and direct with students.

____ 14. Encourages students to feel free to ask questions or to ask for help.

____ 15. Is objective and fair in the evaluation of the student.

____ 16. Demonstrates skills, attitudes, and values that are to be developed by the student in the clinical area.

____ 17. Possesses the ability to stimulate the student to want to learn.

____ 18. Shows enthusiasm for teaching.

____ 19. Is flexible when the occasion calls for it.

____ 20. Permits freedom of discussion and venting of feelings.

____ 21. Available to work with students as situation arises in the clinical setting.

____ 22. Encourages student input for cooperative planning of clinical objectives.

____ 23. Considers individual differences in selecting learning experiences.

____ 24. Correlates clinical experiences to classroom theory.

SECTION II

Instructions - Please choose five characteristics from the above items (2-24) which you consider to be most important for a clinical teacher to have and rank them in order of importance. Place the number of the items in the blank provided with 1 denoting most important.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Bibliography

Armington, C., et al. "Student Evaluation - Threat or Incentive." Nursing Outlook 20(12):789-792, December 1972.

Barham, V.Q. "Identifying Effective Behaviors of the Nursing Instructor Through Critical Incidents." Nursing Research 14(1):65-69, Winter 1965.

Bonapart, T.H. "Characteristics of the Ideal Clinical Teacher," in Instructional Innovation: Ideal, Issue, Impediments. Symposium presented at meeting of National League for Nursing, New York, 1977.

Brown, S.T. "Faculty and Student Perceptions of Effective Clinical Teachers." Journal of Nursing Education 20(9):4-14, November 1981.

Butler, C.B. and Geitgey, D.A. "A Tool for Evaluating Teachers." Nursing Outlook 18(7):56-57, July 1970.

Clissold, G.K. How to Function Effectively As a Teacher in the Clinical Area. New York: Springer Publishing Co. Inc., 1962.

Dixon, J.K., and Koerner, B. "Faculty and Students Perceptions of Effective Classroom Teaching in Nursing." Nursing Research 25(4): 300-305, July-August 1976.

Jacobson, M.D. "Effective and Ineffective Behavior of Teachers of Nursing as Determined by Their Students." Nursing Reserach 15(3):218-224, Winter 1971.

Lowrey, B.J., et al. "Nursing Students' and Faculty Opinion on Student Evaluation of Teachers." Nursing Research 20(5):436-439, September-October 1971.

Mims, F.H. "Students Evaluate Faculty." Nursing Outlook 18(7):53-55, July 1970.

Schweer, J.E., and Gebbie, K.M. Creative Teaching in Clinical Nursing. 3rd ed. St. Louis: C. V. Mosby Co., 1976.

Smith, D.W. Perspectives on Clinical Teaching. New York: Springer Publishing Co. Inc., 1968.

Strohmann, R. "Improving Student Clinical Experiences." Nursing Outlook 25(7):460-462, July 1977.